

<http://blog.beliefnet.com/news/2009/04/commission-cuba-withholds-visa.php>

Washington - The same day President Obama lifted some U.S. travel and monetary restrictions against Cuba, a federal religious freedom panel said Havana is withholding visas ahead of a scheduled visit to the island nation.

Members of the **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom** were planning to visit Cuba to discuss religious freedom with government officials and religious communities.

"We are very disappointed by the Cuban government's refusal to allow an official U.S. delegation to investigate firsthand Cuban citizens' freedom to believe and practice their faith on the island," **USCIRF chair Felice D. Gaer** said Monday (April 13). "Our commission has visited China, Vietnam, Laos, Saudi Arabia and other countries. Does the Cuban government have something to hide?"